

Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/023,898	YOSHIMOTO ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Ronald D Hartman Jr.	2121	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the amendment filed on 1/10/2005.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 44-49 (renumbered as claims 1-6).
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 21 December 2001 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____. |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ | 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material | 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____. |

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DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-43 were canceled and claims 44-49 were added.

Allowable Subject Matter

2. Claims 44-49 are allowed.

As per claims 44-49, specifically independent claims 44 and 46, the prior art of record fails to teach or adequately suggest all of the claimed features and or limitations as claimed by the claimed invention. Specifically, the prior art of record fails to teach a first controller (FC) which controls a substrate processing apparatus as a whole and a second controller (SC) controlling plural processing units of the substrate processing apparatus, wherein a first signal (fs), transmitted by the SC, is received by a hub which is connected between the FC and the SC and which allows a host computer to analyze a first instruction signal issued to the SC and a second signal (sc) received from an information storage section (ISS) so that process history of the process units may be grasped and stored, in combination with the other claimed features and or limitations.

It appears the closest available art was issued to Byun et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,606,524, in which a system and method for controlling an in-line processing apparatus is disclosed. Byun et al. teaches the use of a master controller and secondary controllers for controlling the in-line processing apparatus, but does not disclose the use of a hub situated in between the FC and the SC, nor the use of the ISS in conjunction with signals passed between the FC and the SC so as to grasp the operational history of the plural processing units of the apparatus.

The next closest prior art appears to be issued to Goder et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,424,880, in which a multi-computer chamber control system, method and medium is disclosed. Goder et al. teaches a first and second processor being utilized in conjunction with one another so that operations of the processing apparatus may be performed individually. That is, a recipe and temperature may be controlled concurrently

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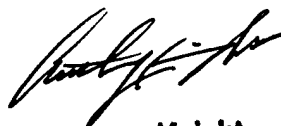
while utilizing the first and second processor. However, much like Byun from above, Goder et al. suffers from the same deficiencies in that Goder et al. does not teaches the use of the hub in conjunction with the ISS for performing the features already mentioned above with respect to Byun et al. Therefore, since the aforementioned references appear to be the closest available prior art of record, and since these references do not anticipated, or render obvious, the newly claimed invention, the claims are believed to be allowable over the prior art of record, for at least the reasons set forth above.

Conclusion

3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ronald D Hartman Jr. whose telephone number is (571) 272 - 3684. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. - Fri., 11:30 am - 8:00 pm EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anthony Knight can be reached at (571) 272 - 3687. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



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